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THE LATIN EPYLLION

BY CARL NEWELL JACKSON

IN one of his *Lectures on the English Poets*, Hazlitt observes with reference to an author, whom he styles sardonically "a modern Muse," "Mrs. Hannah More is another celebrated modern poetess, and I believe still living. She has written a great deal which I have never read."

Like Hazlitt, we are perhaps too prone to dismiss from our minds as unworthy of attention the earlier poetasters of Classical Literature, those of the so-called Alexandrian school, not Greeks alone, but the secondary poets of Latin literature, who at various periods strove to emulate the Alexandrian spirit. We believe, and rightly so, that the characteristic qualities of this school of literature constitute well-nigh all the undesirable elements which may but should not enter into the art of poetry,—such qualities as academicism, over-elaboration, preciousness, in short, for the list is a long one, a certain mannerism which may be described in the phrase, *curiosa infelicitas*. But we are apt to lose sight of the truth, a truth almost paradoxical, that Alexandrianism in Greece and in Rome really meant a revolt against classicism, against the hard and fast literary standards of the day, and meant, too, an attempt to bring poetry back into relation with life. In Alexandria this reaction, headed by Callimachus, as well as a counter-reaction under Apollonius of Rhodes, assumed various forms and aspects. There are two phases of this movement which are intimately related to the subject of this paper. I allude to the predominance of the short poem and the reestablishment and development of romance.

Callimachus, the literary dictator of his age, had summed up the sentiment which then prevailed in his familiar dictum that "a big book was a big nuisance," inspired, it may be, by the motive which led Poe to declare in his essay on *The Poetic Principle* that the day of the epic was over and that no very long poem would ever be popular again. Apollonius of Rhodes had taken the heroic epic and refashioned it,

breathing into it the spirit of love and adventure and creating a new form, the romantic epic.

Now neither the short poem nor the romantic spirit was in the third century B. C. a novelty in Greek literature. Mimnermus, for that matter, had composed brief poems charged with romantic feeling. So had Simonides. But the unromantic temper of the Greek had not found the sentimental feeling for women a congenial or artistic theme. It is a significant fact that it remained for poets who lived on the borders of the Hellenic world to take such a subject, develop it, and give it an abiding place in literature. The Sicilian Stesichorus has been called the first of romantics, Antimachus of Colophon, after the lapse of two centuries, rediscovered the possibilities of such a theme, and Philetas of Cos introduced it into Alexandrian literature. From this time on love became a paramount theme in verse and prose.

Apollonius, as has just been said, created a new type of epic, the romantic. These Alexandrians were ever trying to create new poetic forms, and to bring the subjects of their poetry into close touch with the world in which they lived. The history of the Greek and the Latin literatures is a record of the genesis and establishment of literary forms, and of the imitation and development of these forms by writers of succeeding ages. The Alexandrian age itself was fruitful in creating or developing various types, such as the pastoral, the didactic poem, the elegy, the romantic epic, and the epyllion, and of these types the most, in accord with the Alexandrian literary standards, were brief in form and romantic in content. For what more fitting subject in an individualistic age than the most individual of all the passions?

The epyllion itself is a variation of the epic type which in its broadest sense embraces all strictly narrative poetry dealing objectively with human experiences. But the epyllion is descriptive in character rather than narrative, the narrative elements being used to aid in setting forth the descriptive. The name by which this minor form of poetry is designated is rather of modern than ancient currency. Aristophanes had used¹ the word depreciatively to characterize the poetry of Euripides, trivial as compared with the ponderous lines of Aeschylus.² The word

¹ As *Ach.* 398; *Pax*, 532; *Ran.* 942.

² For a somewhat similar use of the word, see Clem. Al., *Strom.* 3, 3, 24.

is found again in Athenaeus, who used it in the sense of a "short poem."¹ Elsewhere in literature it is not found, so far as I know, nor was it in vogue in antiquity to define a literary genre. So long as the Greeks had these forms, they were not particular about devising names for them; *ποιημάτιον* seems to have been the term they used, nothing very specific. But they were particular in following the conventions adopted in these forms and in giving to each form its distinctive character.

The word epyllion to-day stands for a form of poetry, but to define this type is a more difficult task than it at first seems. For we are hampered at the outset by the loss of almost all the many epyllia in which both Greek and Latin literature abounded. There remain to-day only two or three among the idyls of Theocritus, two of the poems of Moschus, and in Latin the sixty-fourth poem of Catullus, the *Culex* and the *Ciris* in the *Appendix Vergiliana*, and the Aristaeus episode in the fourth book of the *Georgics*. Indeed so uncertain are modern scholars about the real nature of this minor form of poetry that there is no unanimity amongst them in classifying the poems of this sort in Theocritus. The loss of these epyllia is the more to be deplored, for it leaves us with material almost too scant upon which to base a judgment or formulate a generalisation. Yet in the third century B. C. in Greek literature and in the first century B. C. in Latin literature, the epyllion was a favorite vehicle of poetic art, and there have come down to us from the earlier period the names of Philetas, Callimachus, Nicias, Bion, Alexander Aetolus, Euphorion, Nicaenetus, Nicander, and finally Parthenius. He it was who transplanted the germinal principles of the Alexandrian school of literature to Rome, where he became the impelling force in that coterie of young Republican poets whom Cicero scornfully called "cantores Euphorionis." Thoroughly imbued with these Hellenistic ideals, the Latin poets devoted themselves to the composition of these miniature epics, until the success of the Aeneid drove the epyllia from the field. The most famous of these poets, with the exception of Catullus, was Helvius Cinna, the author of a *Smyrna*, upon which tradition said that he had spent nine years of labor. There were besides Valerius Cato with his *Dictynna*, Licinius Calvus and his *Io*, Cornificius, to whom the

¹ 2, 65 A. ὅτι τὸ εἰς "Ὀμηρον ἀναφερόμενον ἐπύλλιον, ἐπιγραφόμενον δὲ Ἐπικικλίδες, κτλ.

Glaucus is accredited, and Caecilius, the friend of Catullus, author of an epyllion on Cybele.

Like their predecessors and models in Alexandria, these youthful poets had revolted against literary traditions, represented in this instance by the Ennian school of literature, just as their successors, a century or so later, the poets of the Silver Age, were to rebel against the rhetorical epic of a Lucan. The epyllion then was born of revolt; it constituted a protest against the methods pursued by the poets of the old-fashioned epic.

What now are its characteristics? As a pendant of the epic group, it naturally conserved some of the features ordinarily associated with epic poetry. But these features, it will be seen, were not of the essence of the epic; they were mainly some of the epic ornaments hallowed by Homeric usage so that they became part and parcel of epic style. The range and the scope of the epyllion precluded perforce the treatment of a subject of great magnitude in character or of a great movement national in extent. The epyllion, however, drew its subjects from the same store-house of Greek myth and legend, and like the Homeric epic it dealt with humanity, its emotions and its passions. But the brief compass of the shorter poem, none probably ever exceeding in length a book of Homer, could include within its sphere only a segment, and a small segment at that, of the Homeric world. To judge from the extant Greek and Latin epyllia and the titles of the lost poems, the epyllic poets chose for the most part a romantic theme, generally the unrequited love of a woman for a man, as the subject of their verse, and made their own little epics romantic, as Apollonius had made his larger work. Hence a classification, based on the influence exerted by both the Homeric and the Apollonian epic, into that of the heroic and the romantic epyllion may be proposed. Into these classes the extant Greek and Latin epyllia easily fall.

We are interested at present mainly in this second class, the romantic epyllion, but a word should be said first about the rarer of these two types, the heroic epyllion, as I have chosen to call it. This type exists only in Greek literature. Examples are the twenty-fourth and the twenty-fifth idyls of Theocritus, both dealing with the Heracles saga, the former describing the earliest exploit of the hero in slaying the snakes sent against the infant by Hera, the maleficent deity of the epic, the latter narrating

the visit of Heracles to Augeas, and closing with the hero's own account of his battle with the Nemean lion. The twenty-fourth idyl is largely descriptive — in most of the epyllia the epic narrative has given way to description — and it might well have been a lay such as the bard Demodocus sang to his courtly audience. Here are the epic formulae, the celestial machinery, the prophecy, the ornamental epithets, such elements as recall unmistakably the Homeric heroic epic. In the twenty-fifth idyl the Homeric tone is even more prominent. Homeric in its fidelity to nature is the characterization of the loquacious husbandman, and Homeric too is the realization of the all-pervading presence of the gods and their intervention in human affairs. This idyl is a masterly imitation of the style of the *Odyssey*, an epic fragment told in the leisurely manner of the primitive epic poet.

But this type of epyllion was too reminiscent of the unpopular and antiquated heroic epic. The more common type is the romantic. Who it was that first fused the epic narrative of facts with the lyric expression of innermost feeling and created a new poetic form, one cannot say. It may have been Stesichorus who was interested in so many different literary forms, and who told in amatory verse of the maiden Calyce who was spurned by her lover Euathlus and died by her own hand. It may have been Philetas of Cos who, following in the footsteps of the Sicilian poet, took over the romantic theme and by the popular success of his own epyllia established the form in literature. The works of both poets are lost. It is impossible, therefore, to render judgment. We do possess, however, a poem which was to exercise over subsequent Greek and Latin epic literature an influence of the widest extent. In the third book of the *Argonautica* Apollonius had analyzed the growing love of Medea for Jason, from her mild interest in the hero to overpowering passion. He had stamped his own genius upon the work and drawn the model by means of which the long line of poets from Catullus to Claudian was enabled to envisage their characters. The Greek and the Latin epyllia belong, then, broadly speaking, to the poetry of sentiment.

What may be said of the form of the epyllion? As the Homeric poems in their cosmic sweep had surveyed the whole of human experience, as the epic of all literary forms is the most nearly universal, in that it comprises, besides the epic element, the dramatic, the lyric,

the satiric, the pastoral, so the epyllion, a microcosm as it were, tends in its narrower field to treat its theme (in the case of the romantic epyllion, its one theme of love) in as manifold and comprehensive a manner. It is an essential feature of the Alexandrian school of poetry to allow one literary form to encroach upon the province of another. Hence the epyllion is apt to be a complex of at least two different forms. The twenty-fifth poem of Theocritus, for instance, is really an epic idyl within a pastoral setting. By idyl I mean an εἰδύλλιον in its original and proper sense of a short poem highly wrought. The thirteenth idyl, the episode of Heracles and Hylas, is an epyllion set in an elegiac frame. The epic manner of following one narrative to its conclusion before beginning another is here duly observed. Epic too is the simile in verse 61, commencing "As when a lion." But the idyl opens and closes with reflections on love, marked by the subjectivity and the monitory tone of elegiac verse.

It remained, however, for the Latin poets, ambitious to be original, to develop this idea of merging two forms in one poem, or rather of setting one form within another. In his sixty-fourth poem Catullus has put the lyric lament of Ariadne, descriptive entirely, within a piece of pure narrative, that is, a romantic within an epyllion almost heroic, and then, to boot, following the heroic epyllion an epithalamium which is essentially a variation of the elegiac genus. The Aristaeus episode in the fourth book of the *Georgics* follows a somewhat similar arrangement, in that the lament of Orpheus is preceded and followed by the Aristaeus epyllion. The author of the *Ciris* outdid all his fellow-poets by combining epic, lyric, and dramatic elements, and then adding to the mixture a bit of didactic verse, and closing this effort with a metamorphosis, a form distinct in itself. Finally in the *Culex*, the epyllion lies side by side with the pastoral. None of these poets, it would seem, had learned the Theocritean or the Virgilian art (as it appears in the *Aeneid*) of weaving these separate threads into a single texture. The step from epic to lyric, or epic to pastoral, or epic to elegy is too abrupt, with the result that unity of effect is destroyed.

The Latin epyllion, therefore, is a composite poem. Is it possible to discriminate it from a form like the elegy which of all lyric forms most resembles the epic in style, diction, and metre, especially the objective, narrative elegy of Alexandria and Rome, which dealt almost exclusively

with the psychology of passion and sentiment? Can some epistles, for example, in the *Heroides* or some parts of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid be regarded as epyllia? The personages in both elegy and epyllion belong to the same world, gods and heroes, humanized, however, in harmony with the new realistic spirit then permeating literature. Very rarely are human beings introduced, such as the old woman in the *Hecale* of Callimachus, or the shepherd in the *Culex*. Indeed, there are striking similarities between both epyllion and elegy, not only in content but in manner of presentation. But these forms were, I believe, regarded as distinct in ancient literary criticism, and the essential difference between the objective, narrative elegy and the romantic epyllion is largely one of style. The latter may be briefly defined as a short poem of mythological content in hexameters and in the epic manner. The meter alone is an important criterion which would serve to distinguish an epyllion from an elegy. But more than that, the epic manner, if consistently employed, is sufficient to discriminate the epyllion from all other forms of the idyl.

Now this epic manner manifests itself in various ways. In the Medea episode, for example, at the beginning of the seventh book of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid rises for the moment into the epic style with an *ecce* in verse 104 and a simile in verse 106, just as Juvenal in his fourth satire¹ affects the large utterance, the *dignitas et amplitudo*, to use a phrase of Gellius (6, 14, 3), with his invocation of Calliope and the Pierides, and his use of *ut perhibent* (34-36 and 17). Similarly Propertius (1, 20) tinges his elegy with epic coloring, or, to be more exact, sets an epyllion composed in elegiac verse, within an elegiac frame. His theme is identical with that of the thirteenth idyl of Theocritus, and the Theocritean influence is very apparent. The prologue contains an address to his friend Gallus in the elegiac mode, comparable with the address of Theocritus to Nicias: then in verse 17 Propertius with a *namque ferunt* begins in epic style to tell of the loss of Hylas; the poem closes with an epilogue of two lines distinctly elegiac in tone.

Other forms of literature, therefore, may be marked at times by the epic style, and yet not be of the epos. What then is the epic manner

¹ I owe this reference and many stimulating suggestions to the kindness of Professor A. A. Howard.

as applied to the Latin epyllia? We must confine ourselves now to the more important considerations.

Unlike the extant Greek epyllia, the Latin poems, in imitation of the epic, begin with an invocation: the *Culex*, of Apollo, the Pierides, and Pales, thus revealing epic and pastoral inspiration; the *Ciris*, of the Pierides; the Aristaëus episode, of the Muses. The only exception is to be found in Catullus, who being nearer the stream of Alexandrian influence, follows the Greek custom and begins his narrative *in medias res*. So too he closes the central episode of his poem by leaving Ariadne at the moment when her own happiness is secured by her divine marriage, adhering therein to the method pursued by the great epic poets of all time, who with the sense of life ever going on never really complete their poems. The *Iliad* closes, it will be remembered, with an indication of the death of Achilles and the capture of Troy, the *Aeneid* with a hint of the future fortunes of Aeneas, and almost the last line of *Paradise Lost* reads:

The world was all before them.

Theocritus too, artist that he was, had divined the secret and at the end of his Heracliscus idyl had forecast the future of the hero. But the lesser poets, or, if we follow tradition, the youthful poet of the *Ciris* and the *Culex*, failed to recognize this cardinal principle of the epos.

Among other conventions which gave a decidedly epic tone to these epyllia are the catalogues, the similes, the supernatural machinery, the prophecies, the descriptions of Hades, the apostrophes, the epithets and the formulae, the sensuous charm of proper names, the use of such epical phraseology as *ut perhibent, fertur, dicuntur*, etc., to show dependence on Greek originals, or of *ecce* to bring events in Apollonian fashion vividly before the mind of the reader, as well as the stereotyped locutions of which the *est locus* is typical, and finally the objectivity of treatment which the epic poet always observes. Such ornaments as these are too familiar to need exposition. Not all, by any means, are to be found in any one of these epyllia; out of the assortment the poet selected such as were germane to his purpose, Catullus very sparingly, for his poem is largely descriptive, Virgil more widely, for the narrative element in the Aristaëus episode predominates.

Such, in brief, are some of the stock devices which go to prove the relationship of this minor form of the poetic art to its professed model.

There is one other phase of the Latin epyllion which demands attention, and that is the ἡθοροῦία, or the description of a character in a given situation.

The reëstablishment and development of romance, as has been said, was one aspect, and a very important aspect, of the whole Alexandrian movement. The antipathy felt by the poets of the classical age to the introduction of love as a theme in literature had been followed in Hellenistic times by a general recognition of the part played by love in human life. The poet who was largely instrumental in effecting this change of feeling and in creating the romantic treatment was Apollonius of Rhodes. The impulse which he gave towards the development of the Latin epic and epyllion is more powerful than is commonly believed. It is a matter of general knowledge that his Medea inspired the Ariadne of Catullus, the Scylla of the *Ciris*, the Dido of the *Aeneid*, and the Medea of Valerius Flaccus, and that his Chalciope, the confidante of Medea, became the prototype of the Carme of the *Ciris*, and the Anna of the *Aeneid*. Such a tribute of imitation only points to the truth that the episode of Medea and Jason was considered by poets of after time as an innovation in the sphere of the epic, the result of which was to give a new direction to the main course of poetry.

But even in matters of detail the Latin poets followed along the lines laid down so authoritatively by the author of the *Argonautica*. On the portraiture of Medea Apollonius had lavished all his art. Henceforth she became the type of the love-lorn maiden, not only in Greek and Latin epic, but also in the Latin romantic epyllion and elegy. Herein epyllion and elegy met on common ground and became closely allied in respect of content and the handling of theme. The poets of the *Culex* and the *Ciris* imply almost as much in their proems, where they disclaim, rather apologetically, their ability to compose a *dignum carmen*, such as an heroic epic; instead they would choose a lighter theme, they would sing simply of love.

Lusimus, Octavi, gracili modulante Thalia,

says the author of the *Culex* in verse 1.

quamvis interdum ludere nobis
et gracilem molli liceat pede claudere versum,

says the author of the *Ciris* in verses 19 and 20, using, it will be noticed, the adjective *molli* to define his style, a stock epithet, by the way, of the elegiac mode. Romance, then, was not yet deemed a subject worthy of a Latin epic; the fourth book of the *Aeneid* could hardly have been published by this time.

Love, therefore, is the accepted theme of the Latin epyllion and elegy, and Medea became the type of the maiden abandoned by her lover. The very traits which entered into the Apollonian delineation of her moods were repeated again and again by subsequent Greek and Latin poets. With sympathetic insight Apollonius had pictured the dramatic conflict of the great forces of love and duty which raged within the heart of his heroine.

Like the maidens in the Greek prose romances, Medea falls suddenly in love with Jason, as soon as she beholds him (*Arg.* 3, 275 sqq.). So the Ariadne of Catullus with Theseus (64, 86) :

hunc simul ac cupido conspexit lumine virgo.

So Scylla in the *Ciris* with Minos (163) :

Quae simul ac venis hausit silentibus ignem
et validum penitus concepit in ossa furem.¹

At their first meeting both Medea and Jason modestly lower their eyes (*Arg.* 3, 1022) :²

ἄμφω δ' ἄλλοτε μὲν τε κατ' οὐδεὸς ὄμματ' ἔρειδον
αἰδόμενοι.

In this attitude are they represented by Valerius Flaccus in his own *Argonautica* (7, 407) :

Ergo ut erat vultu defixus uterque silenti

¹ Cf. the swift Elizabethan fashion of which Rosalind tells Orlando (*As You Like It*, Act 5, Scene 2) :

"Your brother and my sister no sooner met, but they looked; no sooner looked, but they loved; no sooner loved, but they sighed; no sooner sighed, but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason, but they sought the remedy: and in these degrees they have made a pair of stairs to marriage," etc.

Compare also Virgil's words in the *Aeneid* 1, 613 and 657 sqq.

² Cf. also *ibid.* 1008 and 1063.

and again (*ibid.* 511) :

Haec ubi dicta, tamen perstant defixus uterque,
et nunc ora levant audaci laeta iuventa.¹

The passion of love that fires Medea to forsake her kin for Jason (*Arg.* 3, 275 sq.) goads the heroines of the Latin epic, epyllion, and elegy at the thought of their faithless lovers to despair or frenzy. Thus Catullus portrays Ariadne as frantic as a Bacchante at the moment when she discovers her abandonment (64, 53) :

Thesea cedentem celeri cum classe tuetur
indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores,

and (*ibid.* 60) :

saxea ut effigies bacchantis prospicit, eheu.

Similarly is Scylla pictured in the *Ciris* (130) :

ni Scylla novo correpta furore,

and (167) :

infelix virgo tota bacchatur in urbe.

And thus Dido in the *Aeneid* 4, 300 :

saevit inops animi totamque incensa per urbem
bacchatur,

and in like manner Ariadne in the *Heroides* (10, 48) :

qualis ab Ogygio concita Baccha deo.

In close dependence upon this tradition Valerius Flaccus represents his Medea as *demens* (7, 128), and *furens* (*ibid.* 337) and again (*ibid.* 301 sqq.) :

saevus Echionia ceu Penthea Bacchus in aula
deserit infectis per roscida cornua vittis,
cum tenet ille deum
.
haud aliter deserta pavet.

And so Ovid describes his Medea (*Metamorphoses*, 7, 87) as *demens*, and his Scylla (*ibid.* 8, 107) as *furibunda*.

¹ Cf. allusions in Catullus 64, 90; *Ciris* 260; and *Aeneid* 1, 561.

In their analysis of the effects of love upon these maidens, the Latin poets depict their heroines as chilled with fright or fear. Thus Carme perceives her ward Scylla (*Ciris* 251) :

frigidulam iniecta circumdat veste puellam ;

and (347) :

noctem illam sic maesta super morientis alumnae
frigidulos cubito subnixa pependit ocellos.

So Medea in Ovid (*Metam.* 7, 135) :

utque peti vidit iuvenem tot ab hostibus unum,
palluit et subito sine sanguine frigida sedit ;

and Ariadne in the *Heroides* (10, 32) :

frigidior glacie semianimisque fui ;

and Ariadne in Catullus (64, 131) :

frigidulos udo singultus ore cientem.

When Medea in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius is confronted with the possible fate of being deserted in Colchis by Jason, her cheeks become bathed with tears.¹ So Ariadne in a somewhat similar situation addresses² the absent Theseus *udo ore* (Catullus 64, 131) and all the forlorn heroines follow example : Scylla in the *Ciris, genis rorantibus* (253), Ariadne in the *Heroides* (10, 55) *lacrimisque . . profusis*,³ Medea in the *Metamorphoses* (7, 91) *lacrimis . . profusis*, Dido in the *Heroides* (7, 185), with tears streaming down her cheeks. In a like plight is the Medea of Valerius Flaccus, *effusis fletibus* (7, 410), and Deidamea in Statius weeps at the departure of Achilles for Troy (*Achilleis* 1, 929) :

cara cervice mariti

fusa novi lacrimas iam solvit et occupat artus :

¹ Cf. 3, 1063 sqq., and also 462, 673, 761, 805, 1119, and 1161.

² The address is a complaint: thus verse 130,

atque haec extremis maestam dixisse querelis.

Cf. also the *tristes querelas* of Scylla (*Ciris* 174, and 405 and 441), the *multa querens* of Aristaeus (*Georg.* 4, 320), and the *querens* of Orpheus (*ibid.* 520), with the *nec queror* of Medea (Val. Flacc. 7, 485).

³ Cf. also *ibid.* 43, 114, 138, 150.

'Adspiciamne iterum meque hoc in pectore ponam,
Aeacide?'¹

So Calypso grieves at the loss of Odysseus (Propertius 1, 15, 9):

at non sic Ithaci digressu mota Calypso
desertis olim fleverat aequoribus;

and Cynthia too for her lover's absence (*ibid.* 1, 3, 46):

illa fuit lacrimis ultima cura meis.

Cinna's Smyrna, as we learn from one of the three fragments preserved, wept from morn till dewy eve (frag. 8, Baehrens):

te matutinus flentem conspexit Eous
et flentem paulo vidit post Hesperus idem.

Even the youth Aristaeus in the *Georgics* at the thought of being forsaken by his mother "stands in tears by ancient Peneus' wave" (4, 356).

The tragic situation in which these heroines are involved leads the poet to break through the epicist's reserve and give expression to his own sympathy. *σχετλή*, says Apollonius (3, 1113),² *infelix*, says Calvus of his Io (frag. 9, Baehrens), Virgil of his Dido (*Aeneid* 4, 68 and 450), the poet of the *Ciris* of his Scylla (155, 190, 402), and Valerius Flaccus of his Medea (7, 371). So Catullus commiserates his heroine by addressing her as *ah misera* (64, 71).

On the other hand these heroines address themselves in self-pitying style. Thus Medea speaks of herself as *δευλαίην* (Apollonius, *Arg.* 3, 464), or *δευλή* (*ibid.* 636 and 771), or *δύσμορος* (*ibid.* 783). So Ariadne in Catullus (64, 140) calls herself *miserae*, so Dido in the *Aeneid* (4, 420 and 429), and Dido in the *Heroides* (10, 98); so Scylla in the *Metamorphoses* (8, 138), and Cynthia in Propertius (1, 3, 40), and Deidamea in Statius (*Ach.* 1, 939), and Proserpina in Claudian (*Rapt. Pros.* 3, 106).

Then at last when the faithless lover³ has departed, or broken his troth, or proved forgetful of duty, these love-lorn maidens have the same

¹ Cf. also *ibid.* 2, 23.

² Cf. also *ibid.* 3, 809; 4, 83 and 376.

³ Called *crudelis* by these forlorn heroines. So Eurydice in the little episode in the *Inferno* of the *Culex* (294):

sed tu crudelis, crudelis tu magis, Orpheu;

and even Aristaeus "called his mother cruel and named her name" (*Georg.* 4, 356). Cf. also e. g. Catullus, 64, 136 and 138, and Propertius, 1, 8, 16.

word on their lips. Thus Medea, though, to be sure, she was not deserted, yet she expected to be abandoned, implores Jason (Apollonius *Arg.* 3, 1069); "Be mindful of Medea, if ever thou reachest home,"¹ and again later in this same book, she addresses a similar request to him, "Be mindful of me when thou reachest Iolcus. I, at least, shall be mindful of thee" (*ibid.* 1109).² So Ariadne on finding Theseus gone calls him *immemor* (Catullus 64; 58, 123, 135, 248); so Orpheus in the Aristaeus episode is likewise called *immemor* (*Georg.* 4, 491); so Dido "prays to whatsoever gods have just and mindful regard for unrequited love" (*Aeneid* 4, 521), and affirms that "gratitude for favors of old stands firm in mindful hearts" (*ibid.* 539). So Medea implores Jason in Valerius Flaccus (7, 477):

sis memor oro mei.

So Proserpina in Claudian (*Rapt. Pros.* 3, 98) calls her mother, who has left her, *immemor*. So, finally, the gnat in the *Culex* 379, reproaches the shepherd for being *immemor* in not paying the last burial rites to the body of his little friend. Now this poem, the *Culex*, is frankly a parodic epyllion. Its author calls it a *ludus* (verse 4) and Statius recognized the parody and likened it to the *Batrachomachia* (*Silvae*, *Intro.* I). When therefore the gnat reproaches the thoughtless shepherd (223):

heu, quid ab officio digressa est gratia,

the poet has it in mind to parody the laments of the forlorn heroines of the romantic epic and epyllion. And so, at the end of the poem, when the shepherd had learned in his dream of the cruel and untimely death of his little benefactor, he in duty bound raised a cenotaph, *iam memor*, the poet says (394).

¹ Μνώεο δ', ἣν ἄρα δὴ ποθ' ὑπότροπος αἰκάδ' ἔκhai,
οὔνομα Μηδείης.

² ἀλλ' οἶον τύνῃ μὲν ἐμεῦ, στ' Ἰωλκὸν ἔκhai,
μνώεο· σείο δ' ἐγὼ καὶ ἐμῶν ἀέκητι τοκῆων
μνήσομαι.